

IN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1980

Present: Chairman John E. Murray, Anne W. Donald, and William J. Cossart.

The statutory requirements as to notice having been fulfilled, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Murray.

Temporary Appointments

It was on motion by Selectman Cossart

VOTED: To appoint Administrative Secretary Janet Silva Executive Secretary Pro Tem in the absence of the Executive Secretary for the period September 29 through October 2, 1980 and it was further on motion by Selectman Cossart

VOTED: To appoint Account Office Supervisor Dorothy Roberts Acting Town Accountant for the period of September 29 through October 2, 1980, for the purposes of signing payroll/bills warrants.

Letter to Alcoholic Beverage License Holders

Chairman Murray read the draft Board of Selectmen letter to holders of alcoholic beverage licenses within the Town written in concern over motor vehicle fatalities, particularly those involving the use of alcohol, to solicit their cooperation and support in eliminating underage drinking and alcohol abuse in general. The letter was approved for signing after an amendment was added to encourage response by the recipients.

Election Signs

In accordance with a request from Linda Wallace, League of Women Voters Public Relations Director, dated September 22, 1980, it was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To approve and forward to the Sign Review Board the League of Women Voters' request for use of the two energy conservation signs in North and South Sudbury on a permanent basis to remind voters prior to each election.

Minutes

Following discussion, it was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the regular session of September 22, 1980 as amended and the executive session minutes of September 22, 1980 as drafted.

Meeting - League of Women Voters Vandalism Committee

Present: League of Women Voters President Susan Berry; Cochairmen of the Vandalism Committee of the League of Women Voters Patricia A. Jokel, Sandra M. Bell and Marilyn A. Ellsworth; Police Chief Nicholas Lombardi; Juvenile/Safety Officer William Carroll; Juvenile Restitution Committee members Robert Rhodes, Nancy Schaffer, Andrew Oleski, Michael Freundlich and Frank Vana; Alternate Restitution Committee member Bruce Campbell; LSRHS Superintendent David Levington; Conservation Commission Chairman Judith Cope; Finance Committee member Ronald Stephan; Moderator J. Owen Todd; Carol Cossart, Les Bellows, Tim Roberts, Sue and George Thome, J.B.Nelson, John Sklenak, and others.

League of Women Voters (LWV) President Susan Berry introduced the Cochairmen of the League Vandalism Committee, Patricia Jokel, Sandy Bell and Marilyn Ellsworth. She then explained that last year the League program involved studying the subject of vandalism, talking with Town officials and boards and looking at other towns' problems and programs; this year the League plans to take action and would like support, response to its ideas and additional suggestions, and for this reason requested this meeting.

Particia Jokel stated that the League would like to put its time and efforts to the best use it can and in order to make this assessment would like to know the needs of the Town in this area as they are seen by the Selectmen. One of the areas in which the League might be helpful, she continued, is in publicity of the on-going programs which are concerned, directly or indirectly, with vandalism prevention, such as the Fire Department's arson prevention programs and the Police Juvenile Officer William Carroll's alcohol and drug abuse programs in the schools. Publicity concerning these efforts would both increase public awareness of the problems and make known that the Town is taking positive steps to combat such problems.

Marilyn Ellsworth stated that another program which could be publicized is the Neighborhood Watch Program. She noted that no groups have been organized in the past two years. The League could develop brochures for distribution at supermarkets, drug stores, the Library, and through the Welcome Wagon. In addition groups of League members could organize themselves, developing a model from whose experience other groups could be started. Also any positive result, i.e., a crime prevented by a Watch group, could be publicized and would provide incentive for other groups to form.

Other projects, Mrs. Ellsworth continued, could be enlarged and publicized with League involvement, such as the bicycle registration program and Project Identification. Bicycle chops could be alerted and registration could be done upon purchase. The League could invest in marking pens and publicize the advantages of the identification program. It was also noted that many insurance companies offer policy discounts for this protection.

Selectman Cossart stated that, in his opinion, all these efforts were worthwhile and that, in particular, the work within the League itself would be very productive.

Mrs. Ellsworth stated that the League would work closely with Juvenile/Safety Officer William Carroll so as to give him as much aid as is possible.

Chairman Murray urged the League representatives to be present at the October 6 meeting called by a group of concerned citizens to explore possible Town-wide efforts to combat problems of youth - driving fatalities and alcohol abuse. He stated that an educational process must take place - that people must be made aware, adding that this is a national problem which should concern everyone.

Mr. Les Bellows stated that, in his opinion, the biggest problem is fighting apathy. He emphasized that everyone has rights and should stand up and be counted. He cited the problem caused by lenient courts when offenders are caught, but added that he thought an active Juvenile Restitution Program

would change this. He also stressed the importance of an outlet - some place for kids to go - and suggested that consideration be given to opening one school every evening for use by those up to eighteen years of age.

Chairman Murray replied that, through the Park and Recreation Commission, Mr. Vana had run an evening basketball program at one of the schools which had attracted twenty or thirty young people, but that it was discontinued because of unavailability of janitorial services.

There was general agreement that any type of activity such as this, even through serving a small number of people, would be of benefit. In this connection the League indicated its willingness to assist.

Superintendent Levington commented that he was pleased to see the positive efforts which have taken place toward a problem which needs to be addressed constantly in many different ways. Things which parents can do on a long-range basis are, in his opinion: provide a presence and establish values that will enable young people to behave in responsible ways without the presence of adults.

Selectman Cossart reaffirmed his belief that parental education is the key element.

Selectman Donald, commenting on the bicycle registration program, expressed the opinion that any efforts by the League which can reach the kids where they congregate, such as at playgrounds, would be beneficial.

Cochairman Sandy Bell stated that another aspect of the impact of vandalism which the League could publicize is its cost to the Town and asked the Selectmen to provide them with any information pertaining to this subject. The League also, she continued, would be willing to provide volunteers to supervise work programs, find jobs or do similar tasks related to the Juvenile Restitution Program, in which the League has great interest.

In reply, Chairman Murray stated that figures are available relating to the cost of vandalism and that the Board would be pleased to provide them to the League. He stated that, at the present time, the Juvenile Restitution Program only relates to vandalism of public property; hopefully, when the courts have approved an expansion of the program to include the private sector, the League could become involved.

Patricia Jokel stated that the League will continue to study the problem and will be attending various meetings, such as those held at Brandeis University in the past year on restitution programs, and would, if the Selectmen desired, attend as the Town's representatives and report to the Selectmen as such. They would also be interested in sharing information learned through interaction with other towns.

Chairman Murray stated that he would keep the League informed of meetings as they occur.

Selectman Cossart stated that perhaps the Selectmen should consider petitioning the Courts now to allow a restitution program for vandalism caused to private property since the approval process is a lengthy one.

Chief Lombardi stated, in response to Juvenile Restitution Committee member Michael Freundlich's question as to the feasibility of publishing the names of juvenile offenders, that the law does not allow this.

Superintendent Levington stated that the High School has found some effective measures to counteract vandalism of property which might be applicable to the private homeowner, such as physically moving the object of vandalism to a less accessible location and to fix any damage immediately.

Juvenile Restitution Committee member Frank Vana stated that he would be interested in the correlation of Sudbury's problems and response to them with those of other towns and thought perhaps the League study could explore this avenue and also see if Sudbury had any unique aspect to its problems.

Selectman Cossart praised the Police Department in its aggressive pursuit to force parents to take responsibility for the actions of their children, whether or not they are involved in the action itself.

A suggestion was made relative to changing the High School day to begin later or lengthening the hours which could be spent at the school. Mr. Cossart stated that he felt more school activities should be encouraged. A general discussion ensued relative to the High School and problems associated particularly with it.

In response to Sue Thome's suggestion that perhaps problems could more productively be discussed within small community area groups, Pat Jokel stated that this is an area in which she felt the League could help, both in organizing and supplying materials, and that this had been done in Concord.

Mr. Freundlich pointed out that parents too need to reflect on their own habits and how they impact on their children, citing speeding as an example. Chief Lombardi agreed, using the consumption of alcohol as another example. Discussion continued on the subject of how juvenile drinking and/or driving violations are prosecuted and the kinds of disciplinary action that are taken by parents.

Mr. Todd noted that because many people fear retribution, they do not report vandalism or speeding when witnessed. He urged the Police Department to make known that the Department would accept anonymous calls, even though a case could not be prosecuted unless the witness would testify. This would, in effect, give a small Police Department more viewing power and demonstrate to young people that they were responsible to more than the Police Department. He also urged the Police Department to notify the parents whenever a complaint was made, anonymously or otherwise, so that parents who wished to could take disciplinary action of their own.

Mr. Todd also suggested that an attempt could be made for volunteers to monitor court proceedings involving juveniles and to report cases of overly lenient decision to put pressure on judges for more meaningful decisions.

Chief Lombardi noted that some large groups of young people seen in Sudbury are from other towns and that the Department has the cooperation of the neighboring towns' Police Departments.

At the conclusion of the meeting the League members asked the Board members individually to give the Vandalism Committee prioritized suggestions as to the kinds of activities the League should pursue on this subject.

In summary, Chairman Murray suggested the following: Neighborhood Watch Program, Operation Identification, drug and alcohol school programs, Juvenile Restitution Program, Fire Prevention Program, comparison study with other towns and education and public awareness.

There being no further business, Chairman Murray thanked those assembled for their attendance and commended the League for their work; the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Attest: _____

Janet Silva
Executive Secretary Pro Tem